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DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Media Contact

Juan Martinez
Kim Haberlin
Heather Johnson
Caitlin Coyle
617-725-4025
Colin Durrant (MassDOT)
617-973-7870

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MAJOR MILESTONE FOR SOUTH COAST RAIL REACHED AS PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ACQUIRES CSXT RAIL LINES

Transaction comes at same time MassDOT advertises South Coast Rail TIGER ARRA project to rebuild three rail bridges

BOSTON - Thursday, June 17, 2010 - As part of the Patrick-Murray Administration's commitment to the South Coast Rail economic development and transportation project, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) has closed on the legal transaction with CSX Transportation to acquire the rail lines necessary for the restoration of commuter rail service between Boston and the South Coast region.

"Helping this region realize the promise of South Coast Rail has been our focus since day one," said Governor Deval Patrick.

"While others have stopped at talking about this project, we are making it happen. This agreement is another important example of our commitment to bringing this project one step closer to reality."

"The Patrick-Murray Administration has been dedicated to delivering commuter rail service to the South Coast region," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray. "By partnering with CSXT, we have reached a major milestone in this process, and it will be critical to use this investment to leverage future job growth, transportation services, and economic development in communities like Taunton, Fall River, and New Bedford."

"This is another important step towards bringing commuter rail to the South Coast to create jobs, reduce pollution, and relieve traffic congestion. It will link the economies, businesses, and homes of New Bedford and Fall River with Boston. Since 2005, we obtained more than \$30 million in federal funding for this project from Congress because we know what it will do for our economy and our environment. Governor Patrick has been the first Massachusetts Governor to move forward on South Coast rail. I want to thank CSXT for their efforts and I'm proud to have worked so closely with Tim Murray and Jim McGovern - we just refused to quit before the job was done," said Senator John Kerry.

"Extending commuter rail to Southeastern Massachusetts is incredibly important for economic development in the region," said Congressman James McGovern. "I applaud Governor Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Murray for their tenacious work on this issue."

The newly-acquired 30 miles of track run from Cotley Junction in Taunton to Fall River and New Bedford. As part of the agreement, the Commonwealth now controls the tracks and will be able to dispatch passenger trains once the South Coast Rail line begins operation.

In another major milestone for South Coast Rail, last week a new request for proposals was released on Thursday June 10 for the reconstruction of three rail bridges in New Bedford. In February, the Obama Administration awarded MassDOT \$20 million in competitive stimulus TIGER funds to replace the deteriorating railroad bridges. Bridge construction will begin in the fall.

"Commuter rail to the South Coast is this much closer to becoming a reality after years of inaction from previous Administrations. Those of us who have fought so hard for funding to ensure this project gets the outcome it deserves know there are still hurdles to clear, but are feeling ever confident the effort we've put in was not in vain. On the merits, South Coast Rail is as strong as any project in the state and that is why it continues to garner strong attention and support," said Senator Mark Montigny.

"This recent progress with the South Coast Rail is encouraging. Southeastern Massachusetts needs a commuter rail and this new agreement brings this profound project one step closer to fruition. I applaud the Patrick-Murray Administration for continuing their fight for the South Coast Rail, as the jobs and economic opportunities that will be created are much needed," said Senator Marc Pacheco.

"One of the major concerns I hear often is about the difficulty of Attleboro area residents getting public transportation to Fall River

and New Bedford. This major development will help our residents obtain this vital service. I applaud the Administration for this major transportation accessibility initiative for the South Coast residents," said Representative Bill Bowles.

"I would like to applaud Governor Patrick and Lt. Governor Murray for signing this agreement with CSXT. Where others have talked about better utilizing these lines, this Administration has gotten the job done. This agreement is a crucial first step and shows the Administration's commitment to bringing commuter rail to the South Coast," said Representative Antonio F. D. Cabral.

"I would like to thank the Patrick-Murray Administration for working diligently with CSXT to come to this agreement. The economic development & transportation improvement benefits will be felt across our state, and it is a critically-important step in maintaining the momentum behind the South Coast Rail project. This is a further example of Governor Patrick's support for Southeastern Massachusetts and his desire to provide efficient, effective, and timely rail service for our region and our state," said Representative Stephen R. Canessa.

"This is an investment that will lead to economic growth and jobs," said Representative Steven D'Amico.

"I am very pleased that Governor Patrick has stood by his commitment and is working hard to bring commuter rail service to Taunton and the South Coast. I look forward to working with him to make that a reality," said Representative James H. Fagan.

"I am appreciative of the hard work of the Patrick-Murray Administration in addressing this issue that has stymied the progress of South Coast Rail for the past decade. The Patrick-Murray Administration deserves a lot of credit for this important step forward in the realization of South Coast Rail," said Representative Robert Koczera.

"South Coast Rail is a crucial project for the region. Having worked toward this for years, I am grateful that the Patrick-Murray Administration has brought us one step closer to making it a reality," said Representative Patricia Haddad.

"South Coast commuter rail is a necessity for the growth of our region as well as an issue of equity. I am most appreciative and I would like to thank the Administration of Governor Deval Patrick and Lt. Governor Timothy Murray for continuing to move the commuter rail project forward. This agreement with CSXT is an important step for us and we have made significant progress with this project under the Patrick-Murray Administration. I will continue to work with this Administration and the rest of the legislative delegation to ensure that a commuter rail link to Fall River becomes a reality," said Representative David B. Sullivan.

"The signing of this agreement is another step in the right direction to finally bring rail to the South Coast. We have gotten more done on this project under the Patrick-Murray Administration in the last few years than we did in the previous ten years under prior state leadership," said Representative John Quinn.

"I applaud Governor Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Murray on living up to their promise. Because of the Administration's strong commitment to South Coast Rail, we are another step closer to making commuter rail service a reality here in Fall River," said Representative Michael J. Rodrigues.

"I am pleased to hear of the Commonwealth's purchase of 30 miles of rail that will connect Taunton to New Bedford and Fall River. This critical acquisition of rail is the next step in ensuring access to commuter rail service for South Coast residents and continued economic development in the region," said Representative William Straus.

"I want to commend the Administration of Governor Deval Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray for their commitment to the South Coast Rail project. Their commitment to improve economic development and transportation for Southeastern Massachusetts is second to none," said Mayor William Flanagan.

For additional information on how the Patrick-Murray Administration's agenda has led Massachusetts out of a global recession sooner and stronger than the rest of the nation, visit www.mass.gov/governor/agenda.

MassDOT is the new, unified transportation organization created in 2009 under the historic reform legislation passed by the Legislature and signed into law by Governor Patrick. MassDOT's four divisions are focused on delivering safe and efficient transportation services across the Commonwealth. For transportation news and updates, visit the MassDOT website at www.mass.gov/massdot, the MassDOT blog at www.mass.gov/blog/transportation or follow MassDOT on twitter at www.twitter.com/massdot.

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